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Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 L-03 MC-02 AID-20

IGA-02 EB-11 TRSE-00 OMB-01 H-03 /129 R

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08/30/73
APPROVED BY AF/E:WBCOOTE
EUR/WE:RGALLAGHER
---------- 109385
R 311535Z AUG 73
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ROME
INFO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 173940

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, US, SO, ET, OAU
SUBJECT: SOMALI APPROACH TO ITALIANS FOR US HELP

REF: A) ROME 8807, B) STATE 143589, C) STATE 150691,
D) MOGADISCIO 1087, E) MOGADISCIO 1149,
F) ADDIS 9111

1. GSDR HAS ALREADY APPROACHED USG IN WASHINGTON AND MOGADISCIO WITH REQUEST US "RESTRAIN" ETHIOPIA, INCLUDING EXERTING PRESSURE ON IEG TO WITHDRAW TROOPS FROM SOMALI-ETHIOPIA BORDER AREA (REFS B, C, D, AND E). ON EACH OCCASION, US REPS EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER DISPUTE, INDICATED US WILLINGNESS TO PLAY LIMITED ROLE IN COUNSELING RESTRAINT TO BOTH SIDES, BUT EMPHASIZED US DESIRE TO AVOID OVERINVOLVEMENT IN WHAT WAS PURELY AFRICAN MATTER ALREADY BEING CONSIDERED BY EIGHT-NATION COMMITTEE OF OAU. NEVERTHELESS, DEPT INSTRUCTED EMBASSY ADDIS TO CONVEY SOMALI FEARS TO HIM AND OTHER SENIOR IEG OFFICIALS. IN
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ADDITION, EMBASSY DISCUSSED SOMALI FEARS AND DEMARCHES

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WITH OAU OFFICIALS NOTING US ROLE IN COUNSELLING RESTRAINT AND EXPRESSING HOPE OAU CAN SUCCESSFULLY MEDIATE DISPUTE (REFS C AND F).

2. WHILE APPRECIATING ITALIAN INTEREST IN DEFUSING POTENTIALLY EXPLOSIVE BORDER SITUATION, DEPARTMENT FEELS:

A) DISPUTE IN SOME FORM LIKELY TO CONTINUE FOR FORESEEABLE FUTURE;

B) US SHOULD AVOID OVERINVOLVEMENT IN AFRICAN BILATERAL DISPUTE;

C) OAU APPROPRIATE CHANNEL FOR ANY POSSIBLE RESOLUTION OF THIS LONG-STANDING PROBLEM;

D) US INFLUENCE WITH IEG ON THIS VITAL ISSUE EXTREMELY LIMITED.

3. DEPTOFF DISCUSSED DISPUTE AUGUST 30 ALONG ABOVE LINES WITH ITALIAN EMBASSY OFFICER (ALTHOUGH EMBASSY HAS NOT YET RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS CITED REF A).

4. EMBASSY ROME MAY WISH TO MAKE SIMILAR RESPONSE WHILE NOTING THAT US HAS MADE NO NEW, UNUSUAL ARMS DELIVERIES TO ETHIOPIA NOR HAS IT AGREED THAT SUCH ARMS WOULD BE DELIVERED IN FUTURE. ROGERS

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